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ABSTRACT

Many kinds of educational reform, especially site-based management, have contributed to teacher empowerment. The success of these reforms, however, is contingent upon administrative leadership that is willing to share power. This paper describes the attitudes of teachers toward site-based management (SBM), with a focus on the effects of administrative style on SBM. The first part offers a review of literature of recent kinds of educational reforms, including site-based management, curriculum and instruction, calendar changes, and experimental education. The second part offers recommendations based on the literature reviews, on discussions with teachers in the Grand Prairie Independent School District (Texas), and personal observations. First, Texas school districts should continue to use or implement reform programs described in the literature review section. Second, districts should pursue SBM because teachers are more committed to change when they are involved in policy formation and decision making. Finally, two surveys--"Teacher Empowerment Through Site-Based Decision Making" (Pope) and "Site-Based Decision-Making Survey" (Charles)--should be conducted every three years at diverse sites to identify teacher/administrator perceptions of school-based management. Appendices contain a list of strategies rated by principals for their effectiveness with at-risk students and copies of the two proposed questionnaires. (Contains 52 references.) (LMI)

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SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STYLE. A LITERARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Educational change is not a new concept, since "change" was brought to the foreground in 1957 when the Russians successfully launched Sputnik (Perry, 1992). Furthermore, that wake-up call in 1957 has pushed us into the educational restructuring of today. This restructuring has lead to many types of educational reforms, such as site-based management (SBM) and shared decision-making (SDM), changes in curriculum and instruction, and changes related to the length of the school year and/or day (Gaul, Underwood, & Fortune, 1994). These changes, especially SBM, have lead to teacher empowerment (Bredeson, 1989; Dereshiwsky, 1993; Pope, 1993) and SDM (Ruscoe & Whitford, 1991; Schlechty, 1993; Smylie, 1992). These reforms, however, are only successful with the right kind of administrative leadership (Ruscoe & Whitford, 1991).

The purpose of this paper was to provide the attitudes of teachers, using an extensive literary review and recommendations, towards site-based management. In this paper, the effects of administrative style on site-based management were also presented.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to Gaul, Underwood, and Fortune (1994) school reform is alive and well in today's schools. In fact, in the last half of the 20th Century, educational changes have really begun to

pick up tempo (Perry, 1992). There are several types of reforms to consider, such as site-based management, changes in curriculum and instruction, time changes related to the school day and year, and other shifts in education (Gaul et al., 1994; Perry, 1992). Most school reforms are geared toward designing a curriculum that students will feel is important (Stevens & Richards, 1992). According to Stevens and Richards (1992), one such curricular change should be experimental education. Furthermore, Gaul et al. (1994) contend that if the reform deals with SBM and/or instruction, it's more alive than many reforms. Similarly, Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990) state that site-based management is definitely the "hottest reform" in education.

SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT

Site-based management (SBM) involves shifting the control and decisions from central administration to individual schools (Hill & Bonan, 1991). Furthermore, Bergman (1992) refers to the shifting of control as the process of letting go. In order to let go you must establish and encourage open lines of communication, learn to listen, realize that everyone has their own style, encourage new ideas, learn to trust those around you, promote autonomy, and have everyone spend some self-reflection time.

According to a survey by Gaul et al. (1994), SBM is being used in varying degrees. The survey reveals the following types of SBM are being used: (a) more accountability at the local site for results--68% (b) more teacher empowerment--68% (c) local advisory groups--62% (d) more autonomy at site for educational

program design--62% (e) more autonomy at the site for personal decisions--56% (f) more funding at local school site--53% (g) more autonomy at local site for maintenance--49% (h) local site control of cafeteria services--42% and (i) local site for control of transportation--33%. Shifting control requires schools to move toward more participatory management and shared decision-making (Hill & Bonan, 1991; Poulin, 1992). Shared decision-making (SDM) gives those individuals closest to the problem the authority to make decisions, which in turn, gives those individuals ownership of the decision as they become accountable (Gaul et al., 1994; Hill & Bonan, 1991; Keedy & Finch, 1990; Lyons & Shelton, 1994; Maeroff, 1991). A research team gathered some information from just the middle schools within the school districts that were participating in SBM during the 1989-91 school years and the research team reached five major conclusions about SBM (Hill & Bonan, 1991). The conclusions, stated in an article by Lyons and Shelton (1994), were:

> (a) Though site-based management focuses on individual schools, it is in fact a reform of the entire school system. Middle schools cannot change established modes of operation if all the expectations and controls of a centralized system remain intact. School boards, superintendents, and central office personnel must commit themselves to long-term decentralization and enable schools to use their independence for the benefit of students (b) Site-based management will lead to real changes at the middle school

> level only if it is a school system's basic reform strategy. Site-based management is a basic process whereby school staff and community define needs and coordinate efforts to meet them (c) Site-managed middle schools are likely to evolve over time and develop distinctive characters, goals, and operating styles. Middle schools that are free to solve their own problems should develop specific and well-defined missions, climates, and methods of instruction (d) A system of distinctive, site-managed schools requires rethinking accountability. Though state legislatures and school boards will remain ultimately responsible for schools, they must find ways of holding them accountable without dominating local decisions or standardizing practice. The basis of a site-managed school's accountability must be its ability to define and maintain a distinctive character, not its compliance with procedural requirements (e) The ultimate accountability mechanism for a system of distinctive site-managed schools is parental choice. For a decentralized school system, choice produces a decentralized acceptability process in which each individual school carries the burden of product differentiation and proof of performance. (pp. 45-46)

Furthermore, Lyons and Shelton contend that the areas that local schools should be in charge of are determining the curriculum; determining the assignment of instructional and non-instructional time; placement of students into classes; making decisions of the

daily schedule; deciding on how the space in the building is to be used; determining the instructional practices; making decisions on how and what kind of discipline will be implemented; and decisions on programs outside the regular curriculum.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Another type of reform is curriculum and instruction and, according to Gaul et al. (1994), this is the most prevalent. Furthermore, there have been many attempts to restructure the curriculum so that the students will be more actively involved (Brooks, 1990; Monson & Pahl, 1991), as opposed to always taking facts from the book (Conley, 1992). In fact, Gaul et al. (1994) conducted a survey that was sent to 6,000 school board members who subscribed to The American School Board Journal. Of the 6,000, 22.5% of the targeted population responded. According to the respondents, 91% of the districts were currently involved in some type of curriculum and/or instruction-related reform. The popular changes that fell under the umbrella of curriculum and instructional reform were: (a) computer-instructional programs--91% (b) programs for at-risk students--84% (c) foreign language instruction--84% (d) the adoption of a common core curriculum--75% (e) whole-language instruction--73% and (f) drop-out prevention--72%. In the estimation of most of the respondents of this survey, the changes were having a "somewhat positive" or a "greatly positive" effect on the quality of education in all districts. Each of these aforementioned areas can affect the quality of education.

Computer Instruction. According to Conley (1992), technology (computer instruction) is an integral component in our changing educational system. Moreover, he contends that technology provides support for basic skills, it provides a way of receiving information from outside the school, it helps students be more creative, it provides a means of managing student performance and achievement, it provides a method that teachers can use for instruction and clerical work, and it gives students more power over their education. In fact, in some settings, technology is the key to learning and in others, it is an extension of the interaction between teachers and students (Conley, 1992). In either case, technology definitely has a place in education. Avent (1994) conducted a study to find out how to develop computer-assisted software and to gather data which would show the importance of such software. The study was conducted by using available software, by testing the students with that software, and by analyzing the test results. The researchers analyzed three sets of data using quantitative methods. The first set of data measured grammar usage taught in both a computer-assisted language-learning class and a traditional language laboratory and found that the computer group scored higher than the laboratory group at every ability level. The next set of data measured vocabulary usage taught in both a computer-assisted language learning class and a traditional language laboratory and found the same results as the grammar measurement. The final measurement compared the performance of the computer group on two

different vocabulary usage tests. The first test was conducted on words that the students had learned from computer instruction, then a second test was given on words that the students had learned in a laboratory setting. The results showed that the students remembered the computer-instructed words more easily than the laboratory instructed words. Plus, the computer-assisted language learning class showed a significantly higher mean score than that of the class using a traditional language laboratory. Geisert and Dunn (1991) also contend that the computer has become the most powerful instructional tool in education, especially when the computer program is geared to match each student's learning style. Computer instruction can also be an effective tool to use with at-risk students (Dunkenfield, Hamby, & Smink, 1990).

At-risk Programs. A current study, as interpreted by Nardini and Antes (1991), at 100 sites throughout the United States, provided information about the different strategies used with at-risk students. Principals at the 100 sites were asked about 30 strategies that were used regularly and their effectiveness. The strategies were scored on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being "not very effective" and 4 being "very effective". Of the strategies used regularly at least 75 % of the time at the middle school level, special teachers were the most effective, followed by special education, conferring with parents, notifying parents, and smaller classes. The least effective, in the same category, was grade level retention. At the high school level, in the same category,

the effective strategy was vocational courses, followed by special education, special teachers, conferring with parents, and notifying parents. The least effective was referring students to a psychologist. At both the high school and middle school levels, parent involvement was essential to improve the learning environment of at-risk students (See Appendix A). Furthermore, a study conducted in 1992, in 22 school districts by the Texas Center for Educational Research, also revealed that regular parental contact was a key to helping at-risk students be productive (Clark, 1993). If at-risk students are going to be productive, the teachers, counselors, and administrators had to do everything they could to make the learning environment exciting, interesting, and worth the at-risk students' time. Ultimately, if the at-risk students were going to be successful, then we must have had parent involvement. In fact, without parent encouragement in 8 out of 10 cases, the at-risk student will give up on education and life in general. We must have parent support to help all our students be successful and achieve their full potential, but that is really true for the at-risk students (B. Thew, personal communication, May 11, 1995).

Another approach to helping at-risk students be successful is a flexible summer school program (Cale, 1992). One such approach was used in the Austin Independent School District in 1987. It was determined that 4,000 students did not earn the required 70% mastery of the essential elements and that they would be retained. The Austin Independent School District

decided that the 4,000 students had to only repeat the part of the semester(s) which contained the material they needed to master. Using this concept, 52% of the high school and 79% of the junior high school students were able to be promoted. Another approach was used in Warrenburg, Missouri, in which core curriculum teachers made a summer school contract with the at-risk students who needed to gain credit for courses that they had failed during the regular school term. These were courses that were required for graduation. The program began with students being identified and authorized by the staff, then a conference was arranged with the parents, the student, and the teacher. The district at-risk coordinator helped the parents, the student, and the teacher agree upon the amount of work required and the ability level of that work. The assignments were to be done by the student with help from teachers that were assigned to the program. The work done by the student was from areas of the course that had not been mastered. The students had to complete a sufficient amount of assignments to bring the original semester grade to passing. A contract was signed by the student to show that the amount of work was agreed upon by all the parties involved. This summer program had a flexible schedule, which made it easier for all the students to attend. The students were not required to be at school on certain days at a certain time. The students could come and go as they wanted as long as they completed the required assignments with the correct

amount of proficiency and logged in at least 30 hours of class time during the six week session. The flexible schedule made it easy for the students to plan their class time around vacations, work, and personal commitments. It placed the completion of the work and fulfillment of the attendance policy completely on the student. The students did their school work in the library, which allowed the use of all resource material. Along with the district at-risk coordinator, there were three teachers hired to help answer questions that the students might need answered. The teachers were chosen for their expertise in their field and their extensive knowledge of their core area. As a result of this program, many students gained credit for two or three semesters during the summer school session. Most of the students, but not all of them, followed through with their contracts. Of the 47 students who tried to gain credit during the initial year, 42 of them earned passing grades. This gave the program a 90% success rate. In the second year, 95% of the students earned their credits. This summer school program was definitely designed for remediation, and it gave several students a second chance to graduate with their class. Also, this program has probably prevented many at-risk high school students from dropping out of high school. In addition, this program seems to have strengthened the participant's classroom performance. In the first year with participants, there was a decrease of 40 % in the failure rate. This decrease suggests that students felt harder work during the regular term was better than going to summer

school. The next area of curriculum and instruction, foreign language instruction, is also a popular change related to school reforms.

Foreign Language and Core Curriculum. If our students are going to be successful in the future, then they must become more versed in the different cultures and their languages. In order for our students to do this, they need to start learning a foreign language at a young age. Being bilingual or multi-lingual is and will be a definite advantage to anyone, especially our students, in this ever-changing world. My hope is that if we can get our students to understand and appreciate the many different cultures, then we can get them to understand the importance of learning more than one language (R. Lopez, personal communication, April 2, 1995).

The learning of a foreign language at a young age could be during the middle school years (Roberts, 1993). In fact, the middle school years are seen as the cradle of future foreign language instruction. Furthermore, a panel of experts from the 1990 Conference of American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages stated that the young people of today need to have an understanding of the many diverse cultures and that advanced capacities in foreign languages will be required in the future. Also, students engaged in a school district that stresses having a core curriculum show a significantly higher achievement level over time in the majority of the subjects taught (Jones, 1994). In

addition, a study by Ferguson (1993) suggests that within the core curriculum there should be some type of outdoor educational activities. The results of the study done in Saskatchewan, which consisted of 30 middle years teachers/outdoor educators with 10 or more years of experience, concluded that outdoor educational activities contributed to the core curriculum. Whole-language instruction is another reform that is currently being used by a lot of school districts in Texas.

Whole-language instruction. Of the reforms discussed by Gaul et al. (1994), whole language seems to be the one that has given us faith that parents are interested in and care about their children's education (Engley, 1984). Furthermore, Gardner (1991) believes that "the fundamental idea of whole-language programs is to immerse children as early as possible in the world of text to allow them to become meaningful apprentices to competent literate individuals" (p. 211). Moreover, Monson and Pahl (1991) feel that whole language involves changing the classroom. In fact, Monson and Pahl (1991) conclude that:

> Whole language involves a fundamental change in a teacher's belief system about the culture of the classroom... it requires a complex shift in emphasis from the historical model of teaching... characterized this change as a paradigm shift from transmission--teachers transmitting knowledge to students--to transaction--students engaging in a transaction between what is known and what is unknown. Such a view of the teaching/learning process encompasses

> considerably more than the issue of phonics instruction; it has a direct impact on the role of the professional--it forces a teacher to chart a new course. (p. 51)

According to the Intercultural Development Research (1994), the whole language approach "begins with the sharing of a whole story, poem, or a song" (p. 67). Then it "redefines reading as predicting, questioning, and seeking meaning rather than word recognition" (p. 67). The approach surrounds "children with print...uses all forms of communication: reading, writing, speaking, art, music, drama" (p. 67). The whole-language approach "encourages understanding of ideas and patterns" (p. 67). Plus it "develops skills naturally from text as needed...allows time for individualized reading" (p. 67). Furthermore, whole language "uses flexible grouping...cooperative and/or partnership reading" (p. 67). Also, the components needed in a whole language classroom should include a desk for each student to store supplies; a work station which would consist of a cluster of desks; enough floor space for the teacher to have group activities; large chalkboards for group brainstorming; a desk for the teacher and filing cabinets for teacher storage; hooks for the students to hang their backpacks and coats on; a class library with lots of books; a class reference book area; an alphabet area with games and charts for learning the alphabet; an area to store all kinds of paper; a word bank chart; a science area for conducting experiments; an art area with all kinds of art

supplies; an area to display student work; a physical education equipment storage area; a listening center; a computer center; a platform for class presentations and an area to store the platform; a big book rack; small chalk boards with erasers; a clothesline for hanging student projects; a calendar; a class information bulletin board; and a bulletin board for the student of the week. Even the attitudes of the children toward reading have proven to be more positive in a whole language classroom as opposed to a skill-based classroom (Bitner, 1992; Gross, 1992) because the students are experiencing the learning, not just receiving information (Monson & Pahl, 1991). However, whole language instruction should be part of the normal routine in all curricular areas, not just in reading and writing (Powers, 1987). Likewise, in a whole language classroom, there seems to be more use of language skills and more frequency of writing (Medearis, 1986). Another area of curriculum and instruction that seems to get a lot of attention is drop-out prevention.

Drop-out Prevention. Students quit school for many reasons (Dunkenfield, Hamby, & Smink, 1990). The factors that can influence a student to drop out of school are family circumstances, substance abuse, disciplinary action, pregnancy, economic necessities, and the lack of academic success. A student may leave school for one or a combination of the reasons listed. There are, however, many different strategies applied throughout the United States to help reduce the dropout rate. The National Dropout Prevention Center has identified the most

effective strategies from an analysis in 1990 of the current research and dropout prevention programs. The 12 most effective strategies are: (a) parental assistance and involvement--the purpose of this strategy is to give the students a source of support which will improve the students' academic performance (b) quality early childhood education--the early years of a student's education are crucial to the development of the student's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional being (c) concentrated reading and writing programs--if students are going to be successful in school, they must learn to read and write (d) individualized instruction--this involves utilizing a student's interest and aspirations effectively. The program is geared to meet the needs of a specific student (e) utilization of instructional technologies--computer-assisted instruction allows for self-paced instruction, which is a more individualized type of instruction (f) mentoring and tutoring--this is the most effective strategy because it allows students to get one-on-one instruction with someone who is knowledgeable in the subject area being studied (g) workforce readiness and career counseling--individual or group counseling sessions can help students with personal problems; it can give the students the direction needed to choose the correct courses academically, and it can provide guidance towards a career choice (h) summer enhancement programs--some summer school programs allow students to receive individualized and intense instruction (i) flexible schedules and alternative programs--some students can't deal with the

traditional school day, but the use of vocational courses and flexible scheduling of those courses can help students become more committed to school and learning (j) staff development programs--teachers, principals, and counselors are in constant need of new strategies and ideas that help reduce the number of students dropping out of school (k) school-based management--the use of school-based management increases teacher morale, fosters the creativity needed to create change; it gives the teachers a sense of ownership, and creates a climate of accountability, which helps all students (l) and community and business collaboration--if the business community wants the students to become part of the educated workforce, then the business community should be willing and able to help in anyway possible. The education of the students will have a positive impact on the economic conditions within that community.

Likewise, the Texas Education Agency Dropout Information Clearinghouse[1] has the same strategies that were offered by the National Dropout Prevention Center, except concentrated reading and writing programs, utilization of instructional technologies, and summer-enhancement programs. Plus, the Texas Education Agency Dropout Information Clearinghouse has identified other strategies that are effective. Those strategies are:
(a) administrative support--the commitment and support of dropout prevention programs by school district administrators (b) adult education--instructional services provided to the parent of potential dropouts (c) cooperative learning--the use of small

mixed ability groups (d) cultural/language skills--modifying how learning is achieved for students whose primary language is not English and who have different cultural beliefs (e) curriculum-materials development--the use of real-life experiences and goals to achieve a learned response (f) discipline policies--good discipline and attendance policies can help prevent dropouts (g) early identification--a program to catch potential dropouts at an early age is crucial to keeping the dropout rate low (h) economic support--work-study programs can help a student's financial situation and give that student an education at the same time (i) high expectations--expect the best out of all students and you'll get the best (j) learning styles--students need to learn in their modality if they are going to be successful, so teachers need to use activities that are of high interest, involve movement, and involve working with others (k) nonacademic services--extra services such as counseling, economic support, and health services (l) small class size--students see more academic gains in smaller groups (m) student involvement--students need to have a sense of belonging and (n) support services for teenage parents--child care can be provided for students with children. All of these strategies have proven to be successful and useful. Another effective reform related to curriculum and instruction is the changing of the length of the school day and/or year.

CHANGING THE LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL DAY AND/OR YEAR

An additional type of reform deals with changing the length of the school day and/or year (Conley, 1992; Gaul et al., 1994). In fact, time is the one concept that is being experimented with the most (Carroll, 1990). Findings from a survey conducted by Gaul et al. (1994) indicated that the most popular adjustments made to the traditional school clock and/or calendar were: (a) summer school--68% (b) before and/or after school tutorials--48% (c) extended school day--42% (d) flexible scheduling options including team teaching and block scheduling--40% (e) extended school year--38% and (f) year-round school--16%. All of these adjustments mentioned above can affect the educational system. One more change that is related to changing of the length of the school year is summer school.

Summer School. Summer school seems to be the most popular adjustment because it has a low cost per student for the following reasons:

> (a) teachers are on a daily or hourly stipend instead of regular salary; (b) the program uses textbooks and materials provided for the regular program; (c) activities like band, physical education, and laboratory science (all high-cost courses) are not usually part of the summer school program; (d) districts do not provide transportation, counseling, and other support services, except as mandated by law; and (e) summer school operates for a half day. (Clark, 1993, p. 7)

Another reason for the popularity of summer school was that summer school was more effective, than grade level retention as a means of remediation (Martschinke, 1995). If a student doesn't need to repeat a complete course in summer school, perhaps before or after school tutorials would help that student be more successful.

Before and/or After School Tutorials. The second most popular and effective adaptation to the school clock and/or calendar was the use of before or after school tutorial programs (Walter, 1991). A tutorial program used in a school on the Lower East Side of Manhattan met with positive responses from teachers, students, parents, and administrators (Walter, 1991). The tutorial program used fifth and sixth-graders to tutor third and fourth-graders. The fourth grade showed an overall increase of 68% on standardized test, and so the school system implemented the program in other schools in the district. An additional reform associated with changing the structure of the school day is the extended school day.

Extended School Day. An extended school day allows students an extended length of time every day for additional academic help and support services (Anderson, 1994). Anderson (1994) found that in the Murfreesboro City schools that the normal academic day lasted from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., but the extended school program started 2 hours earlier (6 a.m.) and lasted 3 hours longer (6 p.m.). Furthermore, more than half of the 4,000 Murfreesboro students participated in the program. In addition, the program allowed the

students to have more academic learning experiences and skill-building opportunities; it allowed students' exploration and experimentation time, and allowed students the time to learn problem-solving skills. Plus, the students who needed remediation got increased learning time and received more individualized attention. The program gave students an additional 4 hours of possible academic time a day. The program has proven to be highly efficient, financially and academically. Additionally flexible scheduling is an effective way to adjust the length of the normal school day.

Flexible Scheduling. Team teaching and block scheduling seem to be the two types of flexible scheduling that Gaul et al. (1994) find to be the most prevalent. Team teaching, in most cases, refers to interdisciplinary teaming (Ferrara, 1993; Steffes, 1994). Steffes (1994) conducted a study for the purpose of investigating the connection between chosen organizational characteristics of seventh grade interdisciplinary teams and the expectations of the outcomes of teaming. The characteristics studied were the team-teacher election process, team-leader attendance, arrangements of the types of schedules, how close the classrooms were to each other, teacher freedom, opportunities for in-service training, presence of a mutual preparation time, and extent and interval of teaming in a school. The previous eight characteristics were tested for relationships with:

(a) teacher-related outcomes of teacher innovation and creativity, empowerment and leadership opportunities,

> opportunities to capitalize upon individual teacher strengths, expansion of teachers' repertoires, and increased teacher collaboration (b) student-related outcomes of identifying and addressing individual learner problems, improving student discipline, and increasing integration of learning and (c) environment-related outcomes of parent involvement in education and communications among teachers, administrators, parents, and students. (p. 3956)

Steffes (1994) survey was conducted in 99 schools across the United States and was completed by 769 middle school teachers who were members of seventh grade interdisciplinary teams. The analysis of the data was carried out using a Pearson Product Moment correlation and stepwise linear regression. The findings indicated that the following organizational characteristics scored the greatest notable correlational relationship with the dependent variables: (a) flexible scheduling (b) adjacent classrooms (c) autonomy and decision-making opportunities (d) common planning time and (e) extent of teaming. Recommendations from the findings indicated that team members should have input on who the members of their team will be; teams should have the freedom to set up an exciting learning environment for their students; the team schedule should be flexible; all the team members should have classrooms that are close together; all team members should be given in-services on teaming; all team members should share a common planning period and have a conference period; and all "core"

teachers should be on a team. Furthermore, Ferrara (1993) concluded from his evaluation of interdisciplinary teams that teaming met the needs of the students, allowed for better understanding of the students, improved the learning because all the subjects were tied together through thematic units, and showed school-wide improvement on achievement tests. Likewise, block scheduling seems to have positive aspects (T. Blanchard, personal communication, June 1, 1995). For example, there are many advantages to having the students every other day. For instance, in a language arts classroom, the block schedule gives the teacher time to have the class read a short story, arrange the room into cooperative groups, have a group discussion about the main idea of the story, do a group assignment, and then put the room back in its proper order for the next class. Also, with fewer class changes, there is more time spent teaching as opposed to spending time settling down the students; the students don't spend as much time in the hallways, which cuts down on the number of discipline referrals written during passing periods. Plus, the teachers don't waste as much time checking roll and doing the many clerical duties that are done at the beginning of each class. Some of that time can be spent getting to know more about the students, which helps with student-teacher relationships and also helps cut down on the number of discipline referrals, because the teachers can get their expectations across more easily. Moreover, the teachers can really instruct in an in-depth manner when they are teaching

a concept that is hard for students to understand. Likewise, the students learn time management and organizational skills because they meet their classes every other day and they have to remember information given to them by their teacher. Mrs. Blanchard, Team Leader at Truman Middle School in the Grand Prairie Independent School District, concludes that, "block scheduling has definitely had a positive influence on the students, the staff and myself" (personal communication, June 1, 1995). Another way to change the school calendar would be to have extended school year or year-round school.

Extended School Year and Year-round School. Farrell (1991) contends that the school calendar is definitely a topic of concern in this country and, that the extended year calendar seems to be both popular and successful. In fact, Farrell's (1991) study revealed that standardized test scores didn't show a positive effect for the use of year-round school, but that teachers, parents, and even students found that year-round school affected student performance in other important ways. The school on a year-round calendar showed significantly greater financial savings and an improvement in the quality of interaction within the district. Likewise, Smith (1986) conducted a study in the Los Angeles Unified School District that investigated the attitudes of teachers and parents toward two different types of school calendars, the traditional school calendar and a 45-15 year-round school plan. Data from both the Farrell (1991) and Smith

(1986) studies showed that year-round school was preferred over the traditional calendar by parents and teachers. Plus, an analysis by McBryde (1989) of year-round school administrators and traditional calendar administrators showed that administrators in a year-round school setting showed less signs of burnout. Moreover, a study by Quinlan et al. (1987) stated that burnout in teachers and students was less likely in the year-round school calendar setting, plus the absentee rate for teachers and students also dropped off.

EXPERIMENTAL EDUCATION

The last type of change in school reforms that is taking place is the use of experimental education (Stevens & Richards, 1992). The description of experimental education, given by Stevens and Richards (1992) and their resources, follows:

> Experimental Education is the process of actively engaging students in an experience that will have real consequences. Students make discoveries and experiment with knowledge themselves instead of hearing or reading about the experiences of others. Students also reflect on their experiences, thus developing new skills, new attitudes, and new theories or ways of thinking. John Dewey (1938) was an early promoter of the idea of learning through direct experiences, by action and reflection. This type of learning differs from much traditional education in that teachers first immerse students in action and then ask them to reflect on the experience. In traditional classrooms, teachers begin by

> setting knowledge (including analysis and synthesis) before students. They hope students will later find ways to apply the knowledge in action. (p. 1)

Given these changes in school reforms, the next ideas that must be considered are how the teachers feel about those reforms and how administrative style can affect those changes in the educational system.

TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFORMS

Teachers also seem to have a positive attitude toward school reforms, such as SBM, because of teacher empowerment (Bredeson, 1989; Dereshiwsky, 1993; Pope, 1993) and shared decision-making (Ruscoe & Whitford, 1991; Schlechty, 1993; Smylie, 1992). Empowerment eventually creates teachers who are positive, energetic, and enthusiastic about their school and students (Bredeson, 1989). Furthermore, Bredeson (1989) contends that when teachers are empowered, they are more willing to head-up projects and to work on teams, which leads to innovative and creative ideas from individual teachers and teams. Teachers are also more satisfied with decisions made by a team, rather than decisions made alone (Liontos, 1993). It also makes sense for those closest to the students to make the decisions that will effect their education (Maeroff, 1991). Likewise, Maeroff (1991) contends that teachers have the desire to be involved in the decision-making process. In fact, the findings of a survey, given to a group of exceptional teachers, states that 96% feel that teachers should have an expanded role

in decision-making. Furthermore, if the teachers are involved in the solving of educational problems through SBM, then teachers will be more interested in finding solutions (Bergman, 1992; Gaul et al., 1994; Hill & Bonan, 1991; Lyons & Shelton, 1994; Maeroff, 1991). If teachers participate in SBM, they also feel they have a major influence on the quality of their workplace (Keedy & Finch, 1990). Moreover, if change is going to take place, it needs to come from the teachers working together and not from the central office (Editor, 1992; Smylie, 1992). Most teachers would agree that the amount of change taking place is due largely to SBM (Keedy & Finch, 1990) and the amount of participation in SBM is affected by the issues being discussed, especially if those issues are important to the teachers (Conway, 1984; Smylie, 1992). Thus, teachers appreciate being a part of shared decision-making (SDM) and SBM, but they feel that having a supportive administrator is what makes SDM and SBM work (Ruscoe & Whitford, 1991).

ADMINISTRATIVE STYLE

Success of SDM and SBM is certainly determined, in part, by administrative style and the willingness to share power (Bredeson, 1989; Keedy & Finch, 1990), plus the trust and collegiality established over time (Bredeson, 1989; Lieberman, 1988). If principals and teachers establish a collaborative alliance, SDM and SBM can and will work (Liontos, 1993). Furthermore, if SDM and SBM are going to be successful, then

principals can not override decisions that have been delegated to the site-based team, although principals need to realize that they will not always agree with all the decisions. Actually, as schools delve into SDM and SBM, principals become facilitators and human resource managers, which means they allow other people to make the decisions (Liontos, 1993). To meet that need, principals must develop good communication skills, good people-skills, and patience (Bredeson, 1989). Principals' attitudes toward job satisfaction are not tied to being the sole decision-maker, but rather tied to the collegiality gained by SBM (Khan, 1993). The fact remains that principals feel that the more power they give away, the more powerful they become as leaders (Lucas, Brown, & Markus, 1991). Equally as important, principals get a feeling of achievement in their professional lives and a feeling of satisfaction in their personal lives due to the success of SBM on their campuses (Hoyle, 1992).

In addition to this extensive literary review, another purpose of this paper was to provide recommendations. These recommendations included those from a) the extensive literary review b) discussions with my colleagues in the Grand Prairie Independent School District c) personal observations during my early career development in administration and d) surveys.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Related Literature. According to the review of related literature, there are many types of reforms currently being experimented

within education. These authors would highly suggest that districts throughout Texas implement or continue to use SBM, whole language, computer instruction, flexible scheduling, and at-risk programs to enhance the potential for effective schools for all students. The research reinforces that all of these programs can be effective, even moreso with SBM.

SBM is successful with the right kind of leadership and the giving-up of total power, especially with the previously mentioned school reforms. Whole language, for example, seems to teach to the concept-as-a-whole and the students learn the parts that make that whole, as they read. If teachers are given the space to accomplish this holistic task, then it will lead to students being more successful in reaching the holistic goal. Likewise, today's students need to learn how to use a computer, if they plan on being productive adults of tomorrow. Good computer instruction can help the students learn the important technological skills needed to be ready for the challenges of the future. If leaders encourage and support ongoing teacher training, then students can and will learn these skills. Another reform, mentioned in both qualitative and quantitative literature, that has a lot of merit, is flexible scheduling. Many students of today need some variety to be successful and the flexible schedule is not the normal, daily routine. That flexibility seems to be one thing that keeps the students on track. Furthermore, flexible scheduling is definitely needed by the at-risk students because they seem to be the ones that have the hardest time staying with the normal

routine. Flexible scheduling is just one of several strategies used to help our at-risk students. If leaders encourage these reforms, then teachers will need ongoing training, if these changes are going to be successful.

Moreover, colleagues felt that SBM can and will be successful. That success will come when teachers are given the power to enhance these areas within school reforms.

Discussions with Colleagues. From discussions with colleagues in the Grand Prairie Independent School District, the majority of the teachers feel that SBM is being used in varying degrees. They feel that its effectiveness depends on the willingness of the campus administrators to give power to the teachers. The teachers firmly believe that the schools with the most decision-making powers are the schools that are accomplishing the most positive results with the students, including higher test scores. The teachers with the most power are also at ease with making changes that effect the students. In fact, the teachers basically say, "that they are more willing to sell their souls for one of their own ideas," as opposed to a concept they are told they have to use, because they truly want their ideas to be successful. If their ideas fail, then that failure reflects on them as teachers. If they are told to incorporate a certain plan by their bosses and that plan fails, that failure reflects more on their bosses.

Early Career Development in Administration and Personal Observations. From the first author's observations as a first-year administrator, SBM is the way to help improve our educational

system. Letting the people closest to the problem look for solutions to those problems makes logical sense. The first author has personally witnessed how effective SBM can be. The first author has worked with two different principals and both have encouraged teachers to make decisions. Those teachers were not only willing and able to make those decisions, but they also loved it.

These teachers were allowed to make decisions about the hiring of new teachers, the budget, scheduling, and campus in-services. The teachers voiced their opinions and fought for what they thought would be the right decision. Then they worked hard to make that decision work because they wanted their ideas or projects to be successful. Wanting that success made those teachers work harder for that success. In other words, they bought into their own ideas, which didn't make them feel like they were doing something that someone else told them they had to do. That feeling of control has helped teachers and administrators make SBM thrive at these two schools.

If SBM is really going to be successful at <u>all</u> schools, both authors feel that administrators must be willing to empower the teachers and let those teachers make decisions on a consistent basis. All the districts need to send their administrators and site-based teams to SBM workshops, such as the Region X and the TEA workshops. These workshops can help the teachers and administrators discover what SBM is all about and how effective it can be, if it is implemented correctly. Also, the workshops help

development and expand the skills necessary for consensus-building, which is the key to making SBM work.

Results from Surveys. The authors' recommendation is to conduct at least two surveys found in the process of working on this paper. The two surveys are entitled "Teacher Empowerment Through Site-Based Decision Making" by Gail L. Pope, Ed.D. (See Appendices B & C) and "Site-Based Decision-Making Survey" by Greg Charles (See Appendices D & E) . Both surveys need to be given at diverse sites to see if teachers and administrators feel that SBM is working. For example, the authors of this paper would distribute the surveys to teachers and administrators in several districts that are in and around the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. The surveys would be distributed with a 3-4 week deadline for return. Upon the return of the surveys, they would be scored using the same criteria as the original surveys. Using the same criteria would enhance the comparisons between the original and the new surveys. After the descriptive results were compared, then one could tell more of what has been working and what needs some improvement. Then recommendations could be made on how to further improve SBM and new directions, if any, for SBM.

The authors would also recommend that the surveys be conducted in different districts around the state of Texas every year since SBM is in the earliest stages of development. Furthermore, the authors would suggest that the surveys be

conducted in the original districts at least every three years to see if SBM has improved or if there is still a need for improvement or changes.

CONCLUSIONS

Educational reforms are not something new. In fact, they are concepts that began in the past and have continued to grow, plus they are new ideas that are developed every day. These ideas will continue to be developed and changed, as long as we have a need for an educational system. Certainly as long as we have children to teach, there will be an educational system that will always be changing.

There are many reforms taking place in today's educational society. The most current, innovative endeavors include SBM reforms in the curricular and instructional areas, changes in the school calendar, and experimental education. Each area actually encompasses more than the individual concept. For example, SBM includes teacher empowerment, site decision-making, the relinquishing of power by the administration, and a sharing of responsibility. The curricular and instructional areas include computer-instructional programs, programs for at-risk students, foreign language instruction, having a common core curriculum, instruction in whole-language, and drop-out prevention. The changes in the school calendar include summer school, before and/or after-school tutorials, extended school day, flexible scheduling, extended school year, and year-round school. Experimental education includes the concepts of having students

actively involved, making discoveries, gaining a knowledge base, and creating new skills, new attitudes, and a new way of thinking.

All of these reforms are important to today's educational system. If fact, if we continue to develop and improve in these areas, we potentially create better schools, which can create better students. These efforts, in turn, can ultimately create better workers for our growing global, technological society of tomorrow.

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Footnote

[1]The Texas Education Agency Dropout Information Clearinghouse produced a handout in the late 1980s entitled, Strategies That Work With At-Risk Kids. The handout had 30 strategies. Some of the strategies were community involvement, counseling, flexible time requirements, individualized instruction, learning styles, parental involvement, staff involvement, tutoring, and vocational-academic coordination. The authors believe that the strategies listed in the handout can be effective, if used correctly.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Principals' Report Strategy Effectiveness

Middle School	%	Senior High School	%
Special teachers	39.7	Alternate school	39.7
After school programs	36.5	Vocational courses	33.7
Individualized instruction	36.0	Confer with parents	24.0
Confer with parents	32.5	Notify parents	22.6
Notify parents	28.6	Summer school programs	22.2
Flexible scheduling	25.4	Computerized instruction	16.7
Vocational courses	20.3	Smaller classes	16.5
Summer school	15.5	Restrict from sports	13.6
Before school programs	15.4	Refer to social worker	11.9
Computerized instruction	13.8	Refer to psychologist	6.0
Grade retention	6.3	Retain in grade	2.7

*Adapted from: The Phi Delta Kappa Study of Students At-Risk: Principal Interviews from 1988. This partial chart appeared in May, 1991, NASSP Bulletin. It was entitled, "What Strategies Are Effective With At-Risk Students?" by Mary Lois Nardini and Richard L. Antes. The article was printed in November 1991 in the NASSP Bulletin (Vol. 75, No. 538).

APPENDIX B

Virginia Beach City Public Schools

April 4, 1995

Mr. Charles Blanchard
4408 Durham Ct.
Grand Prairie, Texas 75052

To Whom It May Concern:

With this letter, Charles Blanchard has my permission to use my survey, Teacher Empowerment through Site-Based Decision Making, in part or in whole for research purposes.

Gail L. Pope

Gail L. Pope, Ed.D.

School Administration Building ▼ 2512 George Mason Drive ▼ P.O. Box 6038 ▼ Virginia Beach, VA ▼ 23456-0038

APPENDIX C

Teacher Empowerment Through Site-Based Decision Making

Code:_____

Read each question and circle the rating which best describes your answer.

Meanings of Rating Points

SA=strongly agree A=agree D=disagree SD=strongly disagree

SA: This was true for me 76 to 100 percent of the time.
A: This was true for me 50 to 75 percent of the time.
D: This is <u>not</u> true for me 50 to 75 percent of the time.
SD: This is <u>not</u> true to me 76 to 100 percent of the time.

1. You directly influenced curriculum development.	SA A D SD
2. You had a meaningful agenda and valuable work assignments.	SA A D SD
3. You had the respect of your colleagues.	SA A D SD
4. You were provided adequate training for site-based decision making.	SA A D SD
5. You understood your responsibilities and limitations.	SA A D SD
6. You directly influenced staff development.	SA A D SD
7. You regularly presented information at faculty meetings and instructional rallies.	SA A D SD
8. You were encouraged to find solutions to problems and present them for consideration.	SA A D SD

9.	You were expected to give leadership by chairing a committee or presenting to the faculty.	SA A D SD
10.	You directly influenced budget decisions.	SA A D SD
11.	You would have been more effective if you had received additional staff development.	SA A D SD
12.	Colleagues resented your "power" on the CLT.	SA A D SD
13.	You were empowered to make decisions which influenced curriculum, staff development, personnel, and budget decisions.	SA A D SD
14.	You gained a better understanding of the complex issues which impact a school.	SA A D SD
15.	You were viewed as an instructional leader by your peers.	SA A D SD
16.	You viewed teacher empowerment and site-based management as meaningless buzz words.	SA A D SD
17.	You were not allowed to make decisions which would influence school organization or student achievement.	SA A D SD
18.	CLT decision-making power was limited to operational items such as exam or duty schedules.	SA A D SD
19.	CLT membership was too time consuming considering the kinds of decisions being made.	SA A D SD

20. You were viewed as decision makers by the central office.	SA	A	D	SD
21. You were supported by the central office.	SA	A	D	SD
22. Student achievement improved as a result of site-based making.	SA	A	D	SD
23. You felt free to share your professional concerns with your principal.	SA	A	D	SD
24. Your ideas and solutions were solicited.	SA	A	D	SD
25. Other teachers sought you out to express their opinions, ideas, and concerns.	SA	A	D	SD
26. You designed and implemented new programs.	SA	A	D	SD
27. You merely acted as a rubber stamp for the principal's ideas.	SA	A	D	SD
28. You were to use your professional expertise to design and implement programs for improving student achievement.	SA	A	D	SD
29. Your self-esteem and sense of professionalism were enhanced through your membership on the CLT.	SA	A	D	SD
30. Your principal kept the CLT working together as a team to improve the learning climate.	SA	A	D	SD
31. You would serve again on the CLT (now CAT) if elected.	SA	A	D	SD

Years of experience in education at time of CLT membership:
0-4 yrs.____ 5-10 yrs.____ 11-15 yrs.____ 16 or more yrs.____

APPENDIX D

To Whom it May Concern,

Charles Pat Blanchard has requested the use of the survey, "Site-Based Decision-Making," as presented in my professional paper entitled, EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS, EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS: ARRIVING AT SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING WITH SUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION. Pat is more than welcome to use this material.

Sincerely,

Greg Charles

Site-Based Decision-Making Survey

Site-based decision-making methods are a daily part of our lives as professional educators. The following survey is designed to find out your professional opinions and comments on this contemporary subject. The information you give will be used anonymously in my graduate professional paper at Texas Woman's University.

Please respond to the following questions and statements and return the survey in the self-addressed envelope provided. **Thank you** for your contribution in this study.

General Information

____- Prosper I.S.D. ____- Gunter I.S.D. ____- Melissa I.S.D. ____- Anna I.S.D.

Grade level taught (**Most** of the day) _____

I have had professional training in Site-Based Decision-Making. ____ yes ____ no
If yes, when and where did you receive training? _____

_____

_____

For the following statements, circle the number that **BEST** corresponds to your response from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Principals, as effective facilitators, have the basic sense of communication, listening as well as speaking, understanding as well as being understood.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Principals, as effective facilitators, should communicate with the staff in small groups (committees).	1	2	3	4	5
3. Principals, as effective facilitators, should communicate with the staff in a one-on-one situation.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Principals, as effective facilitators, encourage professional communications of expression without repercussions.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Principals, as effective facilitators, encourage teachers to contribute to the development of a plan to meet the school's goals.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Principals, as effective facilitators, must serve as a member of a committee, not always as the leader.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Principals, as effective facilitators, must have the same skills, knowledge, and training as the staff in decision-making.	1	2	3	4	5

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	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. Principals, as effective facilitators, encourage freedom of choice for teachers in zones of interest for committee service (e.g. Curriculum, Inservice training, Budget, Personnel selection, Student discipline, and Scheduling).	1	2	3	4	5
9. Principals, as effective facilitators, encourage community members to serve on Site-Based Decision-Making committees.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Principals, as effective facilitators, are trustworthy, discussing personnel decisions with personnel committee only.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Principals, as effective facilitators, are expected to be well informed about concerns, issues, and programs within the school.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Principals, as effective facilitators, will create adequate opportunities to interact and plan during school time.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Principals, as effective facilitators, should be highly visible around the school and demonstrate a professional appearance (well dressed, and fashionable for school events).	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions are directed to the teachers' feelings when given an opportunity to participate in Site-Based Decision-Making (SBDM).

14. I feel the desire to participate in SBDM and commit the time needed.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Teacher evolvement in S.B.D.M. leads to greater support for the effective principal.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel greater job satisfaction because of my role in SBDM.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I feel SBDM will bring about change, namely effective principals and effective schools.	1	2	3	4	5

The preceding questions are open-ended in order to acquire your professional insights and recommendations for **TIPS**. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

" **Return** of this completed questionnaire constitutes your informed consent to participate in this research study."

Again **Thanks** for your contribution in this research project!

Greg Charles, Educator, Prosper I.S.D.

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